

Adult vocational training in Denmark

- SHORT VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMMES MAINLY FOR LOW SKILLED AND SKILLED WORKERS ON THE LABOUR MARKET

GOVERNMENT OBJECTIVES

The adult vocational training programmes (in Danish arbejdsmarkedsuddannelser or AMU) serve a triple purpose:

- To contribute to maintaining and improving the vocational skills and competences of the participants in accordance with the needs on the labour market and to furthering competence development of the participants.
- To contribute to solving labour market restructuring and adaptation problems in accordance with the needs on the labour market in a short and a long term perspective.
- To give adults the possibility of upgrading competences for the labour market as well as personal competences through possibilities to obtain formal competence in vocational education and training.

Participants may acquire new and updated skills and competences to better their opportunities to managing new and wider job functions

and to becoming more flexible on the labour market.

TARGET GROUP

Adult vocational training programmes have been *developed* for low skilled and skilled workers. But everybody may participate irrespective of educational background. Only formal entrance requirement is being resident or holding a job in Denmark. In general:

- The programmes are mainly provided for low skilled and skilled workers *having* a job. Workers and employers in private as well as public sector enterprises may participate in the programmes.
- The unemployed in their first unemployment term may have a combination of adult vocational training programmes of their own selection for 6 weeks. Unemployed with a personal action plan from the job centres/local authorities may participate.
- Immigrants and refugees may follow ordinary courses or courses specifically developed for this group.

Statistics 2006

Number of participants	617.000
Of which women	270.000
Number of individuals (participate in one or several programmes)	318.000
Number of full time equivalent participants	11.000
Number of schools (approximately)	120

STRUCTURE AND DURATION

The adult vocational training programmes and affiliated single subjects from the mainstream vocational education and training programme has been organized in *joint competence descriptions* (FKB). The joint competence descriptions gives an overview of the system for users, guidance staff etc. Every joint competence description corresponds to one *job area* for low skilled and skilled workers. A competence description consists of:

- A description of the typical workplaces
- A description of relevant competences within the job areas
- A list of adult training programmes and affiliated single

subject courses from mainstream vocational education and training programmes leading to those competences.

There are about 120 joint competence descriptions to which are affiliated about 2 800 adult vocational training programmes and 300 single subject courses from the mainstream vocational training and education programme.

They are mainly *short* vocational training programmes, the duration of which normally varies from half a day to 6 weeks, in average 3 ½ days. It is possible to combine adult vocational training programmes in a package including programmes in the same field at a higher level.

The training is *organized* in classes or as open workshops where participants may follow different programmes at different levels in the same room with the same teacher or organized at the workplaces. Normally the training activities take place during working hours. The training activity may also take place outside working hours e.g. during weekends or as distance learning. Language of instruction is normally Danish, but may be other languages.

CONTENT – THE TRAINING PROGRAMME

The specific content of the programmes reflect development and demands from sectors with many low skilled and skilled workers. About 500 - 800 programmes are developed or revised every year. In general there are *three main types* of programmes directed at:

- Specific job/sector related skills and competences, e.g. crafts, technical insight and knowledge of materials

- General skills and competences, e.g. ICT and job relevant mathematics
- Labour management skills and competences, e.g. social communication, organization and management.

In addition there are special programmes for:

- Recognition of prior learning according to the individual competence assessment programmes (IKV) within the adult vocational training programme - with the aim of recognizing competences acquired in education and training, on the labour market or from spare time activities as the basis for composition of an individual training plan including one or several adult vocational training programmes for the participant. See [link til realkompetence fact sheet].
- Immigrants and refugees not having adequate Danish language skills to join ordinary adult vocational training courses, may join specifically developed programmes e.g. Danish language courses combined with introductory short training courses and work placement. According to individual needs immigrants and refugees may join a combination of courses for a short or long period, where ordinary adult vocational training courses are combined with Danish language courses and practical training.

Participants with inadequate basic skills and competences may be assessed in reading, writing, arithmetic and mathematics and may re-

ceive guidance in this context. Participants may follow preparatory courses for adults with low qualifications and competences in reading, writing and mathematics (FVU) as a supplement and support to the adult vocational training programme/-s. See <http://eng.uvm.dk/publications/factsheets/genereladult.htm?menuid=2525>

GOVERNANCE AND FINANCING

The *social partners* play a major role in the management, priority setting, development, organisation and quality assurance of adult vocational training programmes. At *national level* a National Council for Adult Vocational Education and Training (REVE) advising the Minister of Education and 11 continuing training and education committees, each responsible for a specific sector of the labour market. The continuing training and education committees have to continuously analyze the need for new competences on the labour market and for developing relevant new joint competence descriptions and adult vocational training programmes. At *local level* the social partners participate in the governing board at institutions providing adult vocational training programmes e.g. at vocational and technical colleges and commercial colleges. Each institution sets up one or several local education boards for adult vocational training programmes directed at specific local job areas, i.e. job areas corresponding to the joint competence description(-s) that the school has permission to provide.

The adult vocational training programmes are partly publicly *financed*. The providers operate within a fixed financial framework (EVE) based on taximeter funding according to the Budget and provided by the Ministry of Education (taxime-

ter grant per full-time equivalent participant, a fixed rate per programme). There are different instruments to securing that the fixed financial framework not is exceeded. Once a year the school has to present and negotiate activity and budget targets with the Ministry, i.e. the framework within which the school may decide which programmes they want to provide according to the need in the local area. See [fact sheet om taximeterstyring mv.]

There are *user fees*, 500 DKK or 750 DKK per week. Free of user fees are courses in the social and health service, in the pedagogical field, individual competence assessment, and participation by the unemployed in their first unemployment term who attend individually selected programmes for 6 weeks and finally programmes part of a basic adult education plan. The expenditure for user fee is normally paid by the employers. On average the user fee for adult vocational training programmes is about 15 per cent of the total working expenses.

Low skilled and skilled participants are entitled to a fixed *allowance* financed by the state, the State Grant System for Adult Training (VEU-godtgørelse) corresponding to the level of maximum unemployment benefit rate. Companies paying regular wages to employees participating in adult vocational training programmes are entitled to receiving the grant instead. Expenditures for the allowances are covered by employer's en bloc (AER Arbejdsgivernes Elevrefusion). Expenditures for participation by unemployed after their first term of unemployment are covered by the job centres/local authorities.

There are about *120 schools* approved by the Ministry of Education to providing adult vocational training programmes all over the country - the principle being to offer training programmes in all regions. The providers are adult vocational training centres, vocational technical colleges, commercial colleges, agricultural colleges, social and health service schools etc. Most of the schools provide education programmes for adult as well as young people. The schools are mainly state schools, but also a number of private schools provide adult vocational training programmes e.g. driving schools.

TEACHERS

Training is carried out by teachers with qualifications at the same level as a vocational education and training certificate or a diploma at higher education level in the relevant field and with minimum three years of relevant job experience. Two years after being employed by the school teachers also have to have acquired adult pedagogical education experience at least at the same level as required for teachers at the vocational technical colleges and commercial colleges. Some teachers only teach at adult vocational training courses, others teach at adult vocational training courses as well as mainstream vocational education and training courses. The teachers need to be flexible, as new programmes are currently introduced, training may be organized at the workplace and teachers take part in counselling and guidance activities for workers and enterprises.

MOTIVATION AND GUIDANCE

Guidance and counselling activities for workers and enterprises take place in many locations, and many actors are involved: teachers at schools or visiting the workplaces,

local authorities in job centres, trade unions etc. For small and medium size enterprises guidance, counselling and dialogue at the workplace is specifically important. In addition there is a demand for relatively more activities specifically directed at motivating low skilled workers for participation in adult training programmes, i.e. there is focus on information by trade unions representatives at the workplace, with immediate superior etc. See www.vidar.dk for updated information of all adult education and training courses at all levels including adult vocational training programmes.

CERTIFICATION – FURTHER EDUCATION

On completion of a programme the participant receives a certificate. The teachers assess the participant and almost everyone gets a certificate. For about 150 of the training programmes the participants pass an exam and receive a formal, qualifying certificate for the labour market recognized by the legal authorities, e.g. crane driver. All certificates from the adult vocational training programme are *qualifying for the national labour market*.

Certificates from adult vocational training programmes do not give direct access to further education in mainstream education or in other adult education and training programmes. However, there are many options for participants who want to *continue in education and training* programmes corresponding to mainstream vocational education and training or higher education programmes.

In the adult vocational training system participants may receive proof of *recognition of prior learning*

as a result of competence assessment in two ways. As recognition in the form of a regular certificate when the school has assessed the participant's competences to be equivalent to a completed adult vocational training programme, or/and a single subject registered in the common competence description; or as recognition in the form of a competence proof when the school has assessed the participant's competence to be equivalent to parts of an adult vocational programme or/and a single subject in the common competence description.

A regular certificate or proof of recognition of prior learning may give access to specific jobs and sectors on the labour market or/and credit transfer. For *low skilled* it may give credit transfer into mainstream vocational education and training programmes or into the basic adult education programme

(GVU). Admission requirements for the basic adult education programme are being minimum 25 years of age, minimum two years of relevant work experience and qualifications corresponding to the leaving examination of upper secondary school in relevant subjects. The participant will have an individual personal education plan drawn up by the school and normally follow the education and training activities part-time while still keeping his or her job. The certificate from the basic adult education programme gives the same formal qualification for the labour market and for further studies as a certificate from the mainstream vocational education and training. At the higher education level *skilled workers* may have access to continuing professional education programmes, i.e. mainstream short-cycle higher education programmes or further adult education

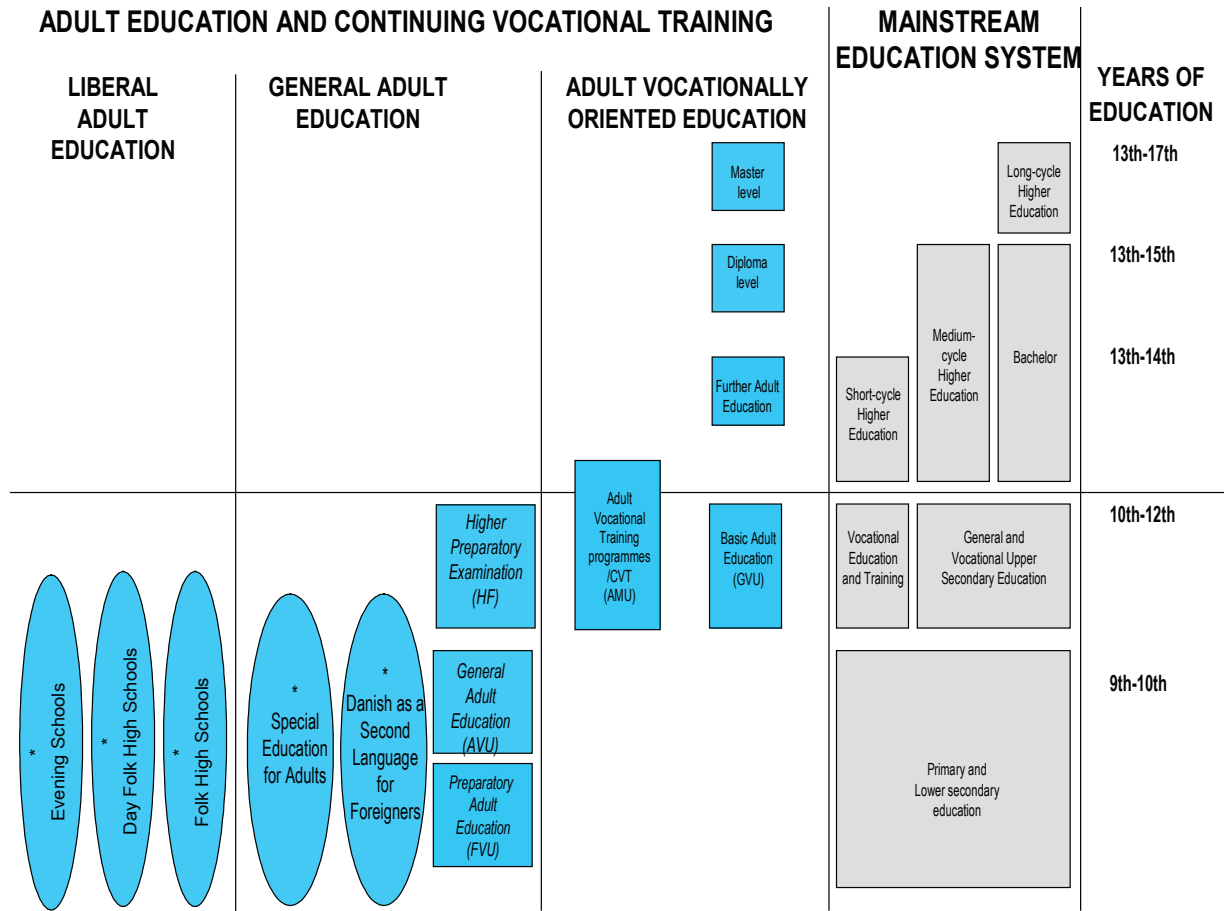
programmes (VVU) and possibly gets credit transfer. See *General Adult Education* (<http://eng.uvm.dk/publications/factsheets/generadult.htm?menuid=2525>), *Vocational Education and Training* (<http://eng.uvm.dk/factsheets/VET.htm?menuid=2515>) and *Higher Education* (<http://eng.uvm.dk/factsheets/dvu.htm?menuid=2520>).

QUALITY ASSURANCE

The providers are responsible for meeting the demands of their local labour market and the Ministry supervises provision and quality of the training activities. Moreover, the providers analyze the quality of the training activities i.e. the satisfaction rate is measured systematically among all participants and a representative segment of companies. The results are made available on the Internet by the Ministry. See (in Danish) www.viskvalitet.dk

Web reference: eng.uvm.dk

THE DANISH EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM



* The level can not be indicated precisely

Note: The drawing only shows levels, not extent of activities